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THE CIRCULATION DEPT.,
LAKE HOUSE

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Registered as a Newspaper in Sri Lanka
Colombo P. O. Box 116
Telegrams. 'OBSERVER'

Sakuntala 'Tambi' will come back

Meet Sakunthala

Tambimuttu, the vivacious daughter of poet and publisher James Tambimuttu, Tambi to his friends, and editor of Poetry London.

Sakunthala, 24, is accompanying her father, who was recently in India looking for material for his Indian number of Poetry London/Apple magazine which he now edits.

Tambi is on a similar mission in Sri Lanka which he is visiting after an absence of 34 years.

Sakunthala, who lives in America is a student of mass media and works in a restaurant during her off days.

"I love cooking, travelling, reading and I'm extremely happy to see Sri Lanka for the first time. I'd love to come back here for a longer holiday", she says. —(Picture by Tony Freena).

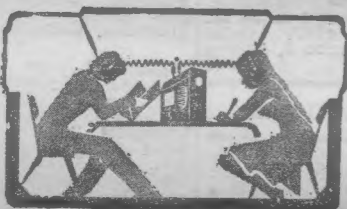
WORLD PAPER

The looting of art treasures has been the detestable practice of conquerors from time immemorial. Colonial times have not been different. Many cultural treasures have been transferred to museums in the West. Will these be returned?

Read about 'The Greatest Art Theft in History' in World Paper on 17 August.

On 18 August the World Paper discusses 'Bureaucrats: The world's unloved goblins'.

Don't miss the two issues.



AUDIO - VISUAL
TRAINING
COURSES

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Roundtable talks to decide...

Who's from Opposition?

by Prema de Mel

All opposition parties will have a roundtable conference to agree on a common candidate to contest President J. R. Jayewardene at the Presidential election.

At present, discussions are more informal and are represented by groups canvassing for particular candidates.

The LSSP has named Dr. Colvin R. de Silva; the SLFP headed by Mr. Maithripala Senanayake has nominated him, the Tamil Congress, Mr. Kumar

Secretary SLFP (S) how they intend resolving the issue between Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa and Mr. T. B. Langaratne, who is reported to have walked out when the party executive committee considered Mr. Kobbekaduwa as its candidate, and Mr. Wickramanayake said: "Our position is that we are

negotiating with other parties for a common candidate"

Asked why no SLFP (S) candidate has been put forward, Mr. Wickramanayake said "it was not necessary at this stage".

Political quarters outside the SLFP (S) feel that the Sirima wing prefers to act as a common candidate so that it would solve its own internal problems and also issues like Mrs. Bandaranaike having to step down from leadership of the party before the election campaign begins.

BUS CREWS

BACK AT WORK

The striking workers at the Talangama depot returned to work today having won no demands.

Colombo South Transport Board Chairman M. T. Marikar says that about 100 buses out of 180 at the Talangama

FROM ONE

ACTOR TO

One of the highlights of his career came less than nine months ago when, confined to a wheelchair because of his serious heart ailment, he finally received his first Oscar for a screen role for his part as a caustic but vulnerable man facing gentility and death in "On Golden Pond".

For his overall con-

tribution in "The Grapes of Wrath".

The late John Steinbeck on whose book the film was based, said Ponda was a brooding, difficult and driven man. But he said of Ponda's acting in the film: "A Leap".

(Over to Page 5)

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FOCUS ON THE ARTS

Poet Tambimuttu's mission — putting Lanka on the cultural map



"Tambi"

A WINDOW ON THE EAST

By Carol Aloysius

Tambimuttu, better known as Tambi, the well-known editor of Poetry London, is back in Sri Lanka on a brief visit.

The rebel who was in forefront of English poets in London in the late 30s when he started editing the magazine 'Poetry London' in 1938 has returned to his country of his birth to rekindle a light in Sri Lanka's Western cultural wasteland, and save the way for a (western) cultural renaissance in this country.

Uppermost in his mind is a desire to give unknown struggling local poets, artists and musicians those who can put poetry to music, a place in the sun by including their works in his multi-media magazine, Poetry London/Apple Magazine which he now edits, features poems pull-outs in colour of poems illustrated by artists along with a record of poems sung or recited to music in a showcase attached to the inside of the back cover.

"There's bound to be a great deal of hidden talent in my country which I'm determined to discover. I hope to promote such talented artists by giving them the prominence they deserve", he says.

Magnetic

An encounter with this Poet and Publisher par excellence is an unforgettable experience. Tambi still has that magnetic presence that makes him stand out in any crowd of artists. Although visibly tired after only just arriving from India, he was only too happy to talk

about his mission in Sri Lanka.

Running his long artistic fingers through his leonine white mane of hair, as though impatient to begin his task, his eyes light up with an unexpected animation and his still handsome face glows with a sudden urgency as he talks of his plans to put Sri Lanka on the world's cultural map.

"I'm hoping to get the support of these patrons of the arts in Sri Lanka, to set up a Sri Lanka Arts Council in the UK", he says. "This Council" he explains, "will be mainly for the purpose of publishing a library of modern and ancient Sri Lankan classics. I have already written to the President Mr. J. R. Jayawardene mentioning such writers as J. V. Jayawardene and George Keyt, in this connection. He is particularly anxious to review translations from Sinhala and Tamil books for possible book publications in the UK, as well."

He has been on a similar mission to India. "In the past four months, I have had the opportunity to discuss the opening of a window for Eastern culture in London with the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, and several MPs including Srikanth Verma, Dr. Karan Singh and Dr. Narayana Menon, Director-General of the Indian Institute for the Performing Arts in Bombay. I have also discussed the matter with Dr. Kripplani of the National Book Trust and Dr. Ureshankar Joshi, Director of the Sahitya Akademi." The discussions have turned out to be fruitful.

ful and Tambi is now already on his way to fulfilling his dream of opening that door to Eastern culture in London. As a result of his discussions with the highest officials of Indian bureaucracy, he was able to win their co-operation in setting up the first Indian Arts Council in the UK with its headquarters in New Delhi, three months ago. Tambi who is well known for his patronage of writers and artists is naturally the Chairman of this new council which will help struggling Indian writers to blossom out as gifted poets and writers in their own right.

He has already made arrangements for his library of modern and ancient Indian classics with the Oxford University Press in India and for the Indian publication of his magazine Poetry London/Apple Magazine.

He on the wayside until someone picks them up someday". He would be happy to find a Poetry London magazine started in very village in UK since the magazine represents the collective voice of the people.

Both Sri Lanka and India have a long tradition of culture older than in most Western countries. And this is why he is determined

that a window be opened to their cultures in the Western world.

This Grand old man of the Arts (he celebrates his 67th birthday today) looks to the government for support to extend his stay here so that he could at least see the germination of his exciting new ideas in this field.

Perhaps a new cultural era will emerge in this country as a result of his visit. And Tambi

will no doubt relish his role as the High Priest of a ritual that will hopefully unearth many a hidden gem awaiting his blessings.

He leaves Sri Lanka shortly and could be contacted at the Lake Lodge Hotel at Kollupitiya where he and his daughter Sakuntala are staying.

"I'm ready to come back any time I'm needed. After all this is my home", he says.

Indira's story BOOKS

"INDIRA'S STORY"

By Lal Premnath de Mel

What is the story of Indira Gandhi? It is the story of a lonely child separated from her parents and even grandparents, owing to the frequent use of imprisonment forces upon them?

Or is it the story of India's Freedom Movement led by Mahatma Gandhi, Motilal Nehru Jawaharlal Nehru and others?

In this short biography covering the childhood and early politics of Indira Gandhi, Lal Premnath de Mel has succeeded in proving that Indira was, trained by circumstance, to face any problem despite its seriousness.

The author, says the book is meant for children and has scrupulously attempted to keep out serious politics. Therefore he has concluded the book with the chapter of Mrs. Gandhi's recent election Prime Minister in 1982. All controversies with regard to her Prime Ministership will not disturb any

school child who is reading this book.

It is very appropriate that the author has selected as the first chapter, a scene from Ananda Bhavan immediately after all the Nehrus (Motilal, Jawaharlal, Kamala, Vijayalakshmi and others) were taken to prison leaving Indira alone at home with "Auntie Betty" to look after her.

Indira's school days at Poona and at Santiniketan are described in a manner that the national institutions are clearly focussed.

The conservative Indian family always preferred sons to daughters. Jawaharlal's mother also got disturbed when she found that she had a granddaughter. Mrs. Gandhi's grandson, as expected, the author has given Motilal's words enshrined on this occasion as described in Mrs. Muthu Singh's "We Nehrus". Motilal Nehru said: "You wait and see that, this girl will be greater than house and boys."

With a number of

sketches drawn by a young artist Newton Hindumage, the book is well illustrated.

However, it is difficult to account for some of the mistakes in this book. In one place it is said that "Ananda Bhavan" is situated in New Delhi while in other places it is correctly mentioned as being situated in Allahabad.

In other places, it is mentioned that up to the time of Independence Jawaharlal Nehru was the President of the Indian National Congress. This is not correct. Mr. Nehru held the post of President of the Indian National Congress in 1929 and 1938 and never after that. It is also wrong to say that Mrs. Gandhi succeeded Jawaharlal Nehru as President of the Indian National Congress. These mistakes should have been avoided.

The book is released to coincide with the 35th Anniversary of India's Independence.

S. FIYASANA.

'Emperor Jones'

Stage N° 501, the theatre group, presents "The Emperor Jones" by Eugene O'Neill at the Lancelotti Theatre from August 29 to 26. Chitrasena will play The Emperor. Kavan Kreenidige directs the production.

For 51 years, ever since its appearance on the American stage in 1920, "The Emperor Jones" has remained a compelling dramatic event; it is more forceful today than at any time in its history. Here O'Neill as poet, experimentalist, dramatist and lover of ex-

otic places finds powerful expression.

We are participants in the tragedy of Brutus Jones, former porter and ex-convict, who becomes the autocratic "emperor" of a West Indian island. Black himself, playing easily upon the natives' ignorance and superstition, Jones enriches himself at their expense and boasts to a co-trader, trader Smithers that he will escape to Europe with his fortune when the inevitable uprising occurs.

Why does this drama

of fear and retrogression give us so powerfully today? When it first appeared, the play ignored contemporary rules and conventions, and even its form (there was no intermission) and length were anathema. It remains as imaginative and as richly theatrical as when it was written.

This is a drama for all men which finds particular depth in the hands of a mature and sensitive actor. It has, indeed, remained one of the most demanding and controversial roles for a black actor since its inception. (From the Introduction to the Theatre Recording).

• REVIEW

Artistic extravaganza

Profile

Poetry moves closer to masses

AS in India, in England too poetry is not yet the staple of the masses. Books of poems do not sell by the million but English poets are able to make a living — a reasonably comfortable living at that — without being required to do sundry jobs.

Even if individual poets do not have a large market, they usually make enough during a three-month or six-month stint at an American university to support themselves for the rest of the year. Many English poets read their poems at specially arranged poetry evenings where admission is priced. Allen Ginsberg draws audiences as large as 2,000.

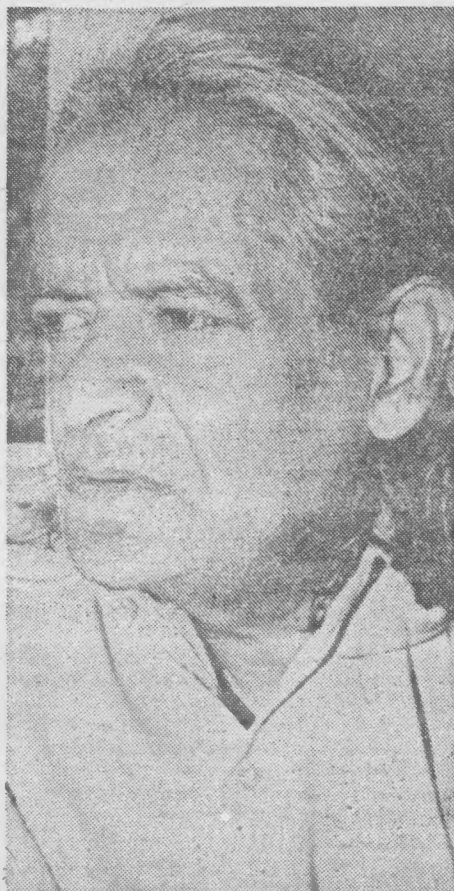
The mounting strength of the poetry movement in the U.K. is in part the outcome of the sustained effort put in for decades by Sri Lanka born Tambimuttu and others. *Poetry London*, now called *Poetry London/Apple Magazine*, which he had been publishing and editing for the last 43 years, has provided the first opportunity to appear in print to many a budding poet whose name is known across the English-speaking world today.

So significant has been Mr. Tambimuttu's contribution to literary activities in England that when he went away to the U.S., Edith Sitwell pleaded for his return. "We need you in London. The bosh purporting to be verse gets worse every day. I wish to goodness you would come back," wrote Sitwell.

While in "exile" in the U.S. Mr. Tambimuttu used to edit *Poetry London/New York*, which also was quite a phenomenon on the other side of the Atlantic. His *Poetry London* blazed a trail and a number of magazines named in the same pattern, including *Poetry India*, have sprung up in many countries. He regards them all as his offsprings. Names like *Poetry London*, he believes, give a distinct identity to a literary magazine and brings it close to the community.

A scion of the late Ananda Coomaraswamy family, Mr. Tambimuttu studied science in Colombo. When he was only 16, some of his songs were released on six penny records in London. "Tea time in Ceylon", a musical extravaganza, was his composition.

By the time he turned 22, Mr. Tambimuttu decided to take a boat to England. The apparent purpose was to meet his Sri Lankan fiancée,



but the two never married. The visit however enabled the young man with an itch to compose songs to come in contact with literary celebrities like Stephen Spender, which gave a new turn to his life.

Mr. Tambimuttu was a frequent visitor to a cafe in Fitzroy Square which was the rendezvous of many literary celebrities. Among the men he came to know there was Julian Symons who used to edit the well known journal, *Twentieth Century Verse*, and Geoffrey Grigson who edited *New Verse*. But to the young man both magazines were partisan and restrictive, and he vowed to bring out his own.

And so within a year of his arrival in London he began publishing *Poetry London* to bring poets and poetry closer to the masses. Since he believed all litterateurs could coexist at the same time and place, he used to publish under the aegis of *Editions Poetry, London*, a general list of books by authors whose names are now well known. The first books of authors like Lawrence Durrell and Vladimir Nabokov published in London came out under this imprint.

Mr. Tambimuttu thinks his poetry list was influential in moulding the taste of successive decades both in the U.K. and the U.S. He was the first publisher on either side of the Atlantic to publish the Book of Jazz which included serious poetry and short stories. He also founded the Ballad Books series of collections of verse which were ignored by academics and the highbrow but had a popular appeal.

Mr. Tambimuttu returned to England after 20 years in the U.S. when Lawrence Durrell wrote to him that a literary agent was "screaming for my memoirs". The memoirs have not yet come out but in London he was invited by the Beatles to set up the *Apple Magazine* to popularise songs and lyrics which could be considered poetry by the man in the street.

Poetry London/Apple Magazine which he now edits is a multi media magazine which has "concrete poems" printed in colour, four page pullouts of illustrations based on a chosen poem and the disc of a poem sung to the accompaniment of instruments. The latest issue of the magazine has Robin Williamson's song on Mabau.

Mr. Tambimuttu is now in India to collect material for the Indian number of *Poetry London/Apple Magazine* which he proposes to publish to synchronise with the now running Festival of India in Britain. This includes Amrita Pritam's poems set to music. He has already exhibited his £250 (Rs. 4,175) book "India Love Poems" in connection with the festival.

The expatriate Sri Lankan, who is making his first visit to this country and later to Sri Lanka after 31 years, is keen that a shop window for Indian writers and artists is set up in the West. He has formed the India Arts Council and spoken to many prominent persons including the Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi.

During his stay in Madras Mr. Tambimuttu will look specially for acrostic poems in colour which used to be written across the bodies of intertwining serpents. This was a pastime of his grandfather the late S. Tambimuttu Pillai, who edited the bilingual *Sanmarkapothini* and *Tribune* in Sri Lanka.

Nitish Chakravarty

Children's feature solutions

Square words

1. Broom; 2. Mattress; 3. Squirrel; 4. Lighthouse; 5. Easel; 6. Lock; 7. Kangaroo; 8. Orange; 9. Egg; 10. Goat; 11. Top.

Just baffle your friend

Delhi 1982

The Evening News Wednesday June 2 1982 (5)

Tambimuttu — poets' poet

A fine amalgam of Ananda got "involved neck deep in the literary scene in London." He recalls his close association with Eliot, Auden, Spencer, McNeice, Dylan Thomas and a

young poets. Deeply influenced by the rasa concept of Indian poetics, he says, "Poetry without rasa would fail to evoke—it is no poetry at all."

It was for Tambimuttu's boldness to publish such rebel poets as Allen Ginsberg and the pop poet Bob Dylan that they rose to the eminence they enjoyed later. Taking poetry to the man in the street, Tambimuttu published the Jazz and the Beatles. He was honoured by the Beatles to edit the Apple Magazine for them.

Tambimuttu is also famous for his tributary volumes on the 60th birth day of T. S. Eliot and on the 77th birthday of Marianne Moore. Interestingly soon after Tambimuttu's prediction at the release of the tributary volumes, T. S. Eliot won the Nobel prize in literature.

Recently Tambimuttu founded an Indian Arts Council in London to promote works of Indian Poets and artists in the West. He is hopeful that both the Indian Government and the voluntary organisations would back the venture.

"Such ventures," he says are not viable commercially. Between 1970 and 1972 he lost as much as per 55,000 in poetry publication. However, he has not yet lost hope and is seriously planning to publish the works of Indian authors for Western readers.

Now that Indian people know his contribution to arts and poetry, he hopes that a substantial number of copies of Poetry London will find their way to India. "I have met here renowned authors, artists, journalists and also the Prime Minister and explained to them need to promote the Indian Arts Council," he says.

This would be a showwindow for India in the West, he feels. The soft-spoken, and gray-haired, poet-publisher, who has been intimately connected with the Theatre of All Possibilities with Honey Hoffman, is the author of three poetry volumes and scores of poems strewn over in anthologies.

He lived for about 20 years in US (1961-1969). Poetry to him came almost as ancestral inheritance. His grandfather S. Tambimuttu Pillai was an accomplished poet and opera writer whose cultural contribution in Sri Lanka already a legend as Tambimuttu is himself a legend in England as a poet-maker.

Manohar Bandopadhyay

Tambimuttu

and admirers who call on him daily in Kaka Nagar.

Lighting one cigarette after another, he listen to and speak with every caller in spite of his failing health.

He is touring India to gather material for the Indian number of his famous journal, Poetry London. He is bringing out the special issue devoted to Indian poetry from all languages to mark the Festival of India celebrations. His charming daughter, Shakuntala (by his American wife) lends continuous assistance with background materials and appointment schedules to the zealous interviewers.

Poetry London, which Tambimuttu founded and has been editing since January 1959, has the historical significance of publishing the first works of some of the greatest authors and artists of England and America. Among them were, Lawrence Durrell, Vladimir Nabokov, C. L. R. James, Henry Moore and Ben Nicholson.

Also to see their literary birth through this journal were the writers of such mark as Bernard Spencer, David Gascoyne and Anai's Nin. Tambimuttu calls his magazine a lodestone to attract young and talented writers, and time has proved the truth of it. In addition to this 43-year-old prestigious journal and scores of poetry anthologies, Tambimuttu has been the guest editor of Poetry Chicago, Atlantic Monthly and Poetry London-New York.

An expatriate from Sri Lanka, Tambimuttu went abroad at the age of 20. He went to England to marry his Sri Lankan fiancée, as he put it, and soon

host of other poets with whom he sat in the pubs of Fitzrovia. They listened to each other's poems for long hours in the late thirties.

Chelsea and Bloomsbury were then, he recalls, the well-known artistic quarters. But his own quarters were the haunt of Verlaine, Rimbaud, sickle and



Shakuntala

Dylan Thomas, Fitzroy and St Fitzroy Tavern, he says, had then no name. Tambimuttu named it Fitzrovia which is now recorded in the OED.

For his literary and cultural contributions in England, he also figures in the Cambridge History of English Literature. He is now 66.

In his late twenties, Tambimuttu was known as a rebel in England when he strove to bring poetry close to the people. He spurned outright both the journalistic diatribes and academic strangulation of poetry.

Reminiscing, he says, "The poetry landscape then was so constipated that it was ruled by a monolithic group of poets who wanted almost a kind of journalistic taste in the mouth."

His journal, as also the Editions poetry London books which he brought out soon proved a challenge to the muddled state of English poetry of that time. He not only shaped the new trend of English poetry but also published boldly the new 'trucks' whom no editors would dare publish for fear of critical hostility.

Over the years, he has provided valuable guidance to the

Tambimuttu: patron of young writers

By DNYANESHWAR NADKARNI

"TAMBIMUTTU is here," said a colleague, and we rushed promptly to meet him at an informal dinner with a friend.

An unusual thrill runs down one's spine. Tambimuttu—legend of one's boyhood. His photographs used to appear often in *The Illustrated Weekly*, and so did interviews with the expatriate writer and articles by him. One knew him as editor of a birthday volume on T. S. Eliot. One had vague notions of him as a poet who communed with the young literati of London during the war years.

For quite some time, at the friend's house, there was no sign of Tambimuttu. An anxious phone call elicited the curious information that the old man had gone to *The Times of India* offices in the evening to deliver some article and that, finding no money in his pocket for taxi fare, he had walked all the way from Bori Bunder to the Backbay Reclamation location of his house.

PATRON SAINT

Ultimately, the great man arrives. Expectation runs like lightning in the air, like hot apples.

One is not disappointed. Tambimuttu is, indeed, a personality. A beautiful man with a flowing white mane of hair, a handsome face complete with a Tamilian hooked nose and withal a genuinely mellow look which corroborates his image as a man full of love and wisdom, a



Mr. Tambimuttu

patron saint of poets, novelists and artists.

"I left my native Ceylon when I was about 20 years old," the old man tells me. He smokes cigarettes with a preoccupied, thoughtful air and sips his beer with equal nonchalance.

"Before the second world war I did a long stint in publishing," he says. "I published the works of Lawrence Durrell, Henry Miller, Anais Nin..."

I hear all these names with a gaping mouth. Who doesn't know these path-breaking names? They were all bold experimenters, and for a young man from the East to pioneer the vintage writings of these great writers was a unique feat, indeed. "Poetry London," the magazine I edited, started in 1938," Tambimuttu continues. "During the war I published Henry Moore's 'Shelter Sketchbook'." Before that Moore was known only as a collector's artist but these sketches took him to the common man."

Henry Moore visited the underground tube stations in London when they were used as air-raid shelters by London citizens. His sketches of Londoners huddled up underground were, perhaps, the beginning of the evolution of his great sculptural, *Reclining Figure*.

"George Orwell took a van through France and Germany after the war," Tambimuttu told me. "It had its sides pasted with these pages from the 'Shelter Sketchbook', and it created a sensation."

I paint mental pictures of young Tambimuttu poring over manuscripts of poems and novels or holding forth in London pubs in the company of rugged geniuses like Dylan Thomas. (I had myself spent a day with sculptor Henry Moore in his village of Much Hadham in Hertfordshire in 1951.)

BIRTHDAY VOLUME

"I remember the birthday book you edited for T. S. Eliot," I say to our guest of the evening.

"Well, that's a sort of family tradition," Tambimuttu says without batting an eyelid. "My grandfather used to publish books on birthdays. For Eliot's 60th birthday I brought together translations of his poetry like the Greek poet Sefaris. The volume was put together at a time when Eliot's name was being considered for the Nobel Prize. And, then, just when it was being got together, I happened to say to John Hayward, 'I hear Tom is getting the Nobel Prize!' John said, 'Please keep quiet!' Eventually Eliot did get the Nobel Prize, and I think the way was paved by our birthday tribute!"

The second edition of the Eliot birthday volume was quick to carry

the legend, under the poet's name, "Nobel prize winner!"

Tambimuttu also edited a 77th birthday volume for American poetess Marianne Moore. "I have lived for the past 29 years in the States," he told me. His magazine undergoes an appropriate change in nomenclature by calling itself *Poetry London-New York*.

"As editor and publisher, I have published the poetry of Indian poets like Amrita Pritam, Buddhadevi Bose, Jibendra Das and Amiya Chakravarty. We have also published poems from Bangladesh illustrated by Fakir Topolski." Mention of Topolski brings back associations of the war years. In London Tambimuttu must have lived as a member of a very closely knit artists' and writers' community whose ideology and outlook on life was shaped by the experience of the war.

"John Piper and Graham Sutherland have also done illustrations for me," says Tambimuttu, teasing out these famous names with casual familiarity. But each name is a world in itself, and one pines for one's own young intelligentsia which has lost touch with the exciting legacy of our British past.

Tambimuttu turns to the subject of popularising poetry. "Kenneth Rexroth used to read poetry in pubs. *Poetry London* used to bring out yearbooks of jazz. At one time I was planning to edit the *Apple* magazine for the Beatles. I have been interested in publishing the songs of Bob Dylan. My activities had for some time a base in San Francisco right in the centre of this world of modern music."

He mentions with much affection the marathon verse of Beat poet Peter Orlovsky who, several years ago, had visited India with Allen Ginsberg. Tambimuttu's British contemporaries of earlier decades, poets Stephen Spender, W. H. Auden and Louis McNeice, have all visited this country in the post-independence years.

INDIAN POETRY

"I have now returned after 31 years," says this ish-like friend of poets. Tambimuttu tells me that he is here in order to edit a volume of Indian poetry to be published on July 15, during the Festival of India in London. He wants to get it printed here. I promise to help him and mention names of poets known in English translation.

The evening lingers on. Tambimuttu is treated to an affectionate meal of sambar and rice. I stop asking him any more questions. One doesn't want to probe his personal life. The aura of a legend is very much around him, especially on this evening. And we shall keep that aura intact for you, great master!

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O. P. Bhagat

LITERATURE

Tambimuttu: The Mentor
Of Avant-Garde

"THE magazines devoted to poetry have done good work against heavy commercial odds: the chief successors to Monro's Chapbook (1919-21) were Geoffrey Grigson's New Verse in the nineteen-thirties and M J Tambimuttu's Poetry London in the nineteen-forties." Thus describes The Cambridge History of English Literature paying warm tributes to Tambimuttu who influenced and published some of the greatest poets of our age in his purely non-commercial magazine Poetry London way back in the forties.

Tambimuttu who emerged on the English poetic scene in the forties has continued to be a dominating force for almost four decades. A gifted poet and farsighted editor like Ezra Pound he discovered talents like Henry Miller, Cleanth Brooks, Vladimir Nabokov, Keith Douglas, Henry

road. He considers Poetry London as the lodestone to attract young talents. He has been editing the journal since January 1939 when he founded it in London and won almost an instantaneous praise from all quarters though not much from the academic circles.

Tambimuttu calls the Indian Arts Council (which he has founded as a single-man venture) as the shop window for India in the West. The Council will project and promote the works of Indian artists and authors. "I have met here the renowned authors artists, journalists and also the Prime Minister and have explained to them the need to promote the Indian Arts Council." He is quite hopeful that the Indian Government and the voluntary organisations would back up the venture.

An expatriate from Sri Lanka, Tambimuttu reached London at an early age of 20. He went there to marry his Sri Lankan fiancée and soon got involved in the literary scene in London which became his real home in the years to come. He remembers with nostalgia how in the pubs of Fitzrovia he sat with Eliot, Auden, Spencer, MacNeice and Dylan Thomas and listened to each other's poems for long hours in the late thirties. At that time, he informs, Chelsea and Bloomsbury were the well known artistic centres. His own centre which became the haunt of

the Jazz and the Beatles. The latter honoured him to edit their famous Apple Magazine which too Tambimuttu accomplished with his sharp editorial acumen and unbiased judgment for talent and originality. The name 'Apple' came from Apple, the Beatles' Record Company.

T S Eliot who commissioned Tambimuttu to edit some special anthologies confessed that he never felt exhaust-

lam in London with Hony Hoffman, the pioneer of the Theatre of All Possibilities. He has already published a book on Hoffman which has been well received. He is quite confident that Abhigyan Shakuntalam can be produced on London Stage without departing from tone, spirit and setting of the original play. In New Delhi, he has evinced keen interest in the Triveni Centre which he feels could be an ideal place for

American mother who is an accomplished singer. She is currently assisting her father in keeping up the hectic schedule for meeting poets, artists and scholars for the Indian number of Poetry London.

Some of the works brought out by Tambimuttu have been illustrated by the famous artist Henry Moore. In this connection he recalls the war time sketches drawn by Henry Moore in London underground. To the stu-



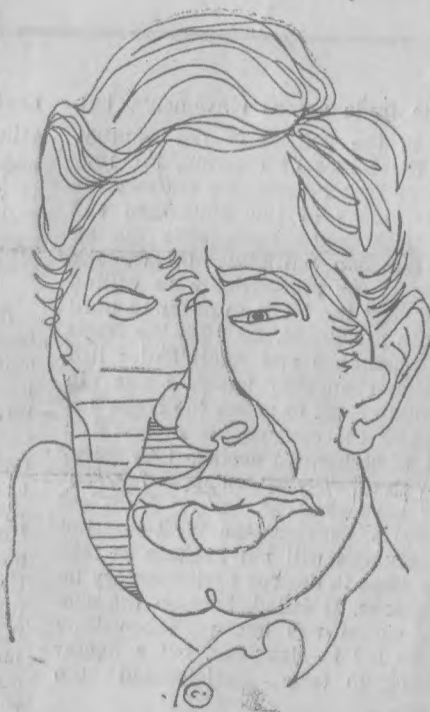
Bandopadhyay

Moore, MacNeice and Ben Nicolson—all of whom he published when no other editors in England and elsewhere had cared to touch their works. Tambimuttu thus not only published the first works of such great authors and artists of successive years but also shaped and guided their works which saw the apogean maturity in the years to come. It is atrocious that the western critics have not yet accorded due recognition to this great poet, editor and publisher of their literature. May be, it is because he is a non-white author from Sri Lanka.

All the same, Tambimuttu has been writing, editing and publishing poetry and essays on arts and music without being affected by any apparent apathy by the English and American critics and historians. Among other authors whose first works he published in his *Poetry London* were; Bernard Spencer, David Gascoyne and Anai's Nin. Author of three volumes of poems and scores of other poems strewn over in the anthologies, Tambimuttu has also been the guest editor of *Atlantic Monthly*, *Poetry Chicago* and *Poetry New York*. He is now 66.

Accompanied by his charming poetess daughter, Shakuntala (from his former American wife) Tambimuttu is on his first visit to India after 1951. He has come on this eastward voyage with two objectives: to collect material for the Indian number of *Poetry London* which would include poems from all languages in India; and to gather moral and material support for the Indian Arts Council which he has recently founded in London. Although over the decades he has been interpreting Indian arts and literature to the western people demolishing their false notions, yet he feels there is a lot to be done in this area. The Indian number of *Poetry London* which he is bringing out to mark the Festival of India celebrations is just a beginning in this direction. He wishes to publish standard works from Indian languages in London which, he hopes, would stimulate greater appreciation and understanding of Indian literature abroad. As a publisher of Editions *Poetry London*

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great authors and artists including Verlaine, Rimbaud and Sciket, had then no name. Tambimuttu named Fitzrovia and St Fitzrovia Tavern as Fitzrovia. This fact has been duly recorded in the Oxford English Dictionary.

Forty years ago, Tambimuttu proved himself a rebel when he challenged the poetry of that period and wrote poetry for the common man. He could not earn much sympathy for the purely experimental kind of writing. Reminiscing the English poetic scene of the thirties he says, "The poetry landscape then was so constipated that it was ruled by a

the Jazz and the Beatles. The latter honoured him to edit their famous *Apple Magazine* which too Tambimuttu accomplished with his sharp editorial acumen and unbiased judgment for talent and originality. The name 'Apple' came from Apple, the Beatles' Record Company.

T S Eliot who commissioned Tambimuttu to edit some special anthologies confessed that he never felt exhausted reading new poets published in *Poetry London*. Tambimuttu brought out the famous birth day tributary volume on T S Eliot in 1948, on the 60th birth day of the Nobel Laureate. It is interesting that Tambimuttu had predicted at the release of the volume that T S Eliot would be honoured with Nobel Prize. The award soon came almost as a surprise since very few people were prepared to believe what Tambimuttu had declared. Another famous work brought out by him was the 77th birth day tributary volume on Marianne Moore.

The saintly looking, grey-haired philosopher-poet, Tambimuttu has been also actively interested in the theatre. Presently he is planning to stage Kalidas's *Abhigyan Shakunta-*

lam in London with Hony Hoffman, the pioneer of the Theatre of All Possibilities. He has already published a book on Hoffman which has been well received. He is quite confident that *Abhigyan Shakuntalam* can be produced on London Stage without departing from tone, spirit and setting of the original play. In New Delhi, he has evinced keen interest in the Triveni Centre which he feels could be an ideal place for performance of modern and ancient plays both from East and West. He has offered his services to see this idea come through. As it is, he has been recently enamoured by the rich heritage of both ancient and modern India. "I shall visit India a couple of times again," he says, "and see how best I can project India in the West. There is a lot more to be done still in this field." His daughter, Shakuntala who has been immensely charmed by the Indian music had decided to make a two-year sojourn in this country to learn Indian music to fulfil her dream. She is presently a geology student at the University of Massachusetts. She has inherited the gift of poetry from her father and has been largely published. Music has come to her from her

American mother who is an accomplished singer. She is currently assisting her father in keeping up the hectic schedule for meeting poets, artists and scholars for the Indian number of *Poetry London*.

Some of the works brought out by Tambimuttu have been illustrated by the famous artist Henry Moore. In this connection he recalls the war time sketches drawn by Henry Moore in London underground. To the stunning surprise of many people, George Orwell had pasted the pages of these sketches by his van which he had taken into the Liberated Europe.

Among the Indian poets, Tambimuttu has already published are; Buddhadeva Bose, Jibananand Das and Amiya Chakravorty. The Indian number of *Poetry London* which will be released sometime in September this year will also contain the record of Amrita Pritam's poems in a slip case attached to the journal.

Tambimuttu would be leaving for Bombay, Madras and Calcutta around tenth of this month. He would stay in India for about three months in connection with the Indian number of *Poetry London* and the Indian Arts Council, London.

* *INDIAN*

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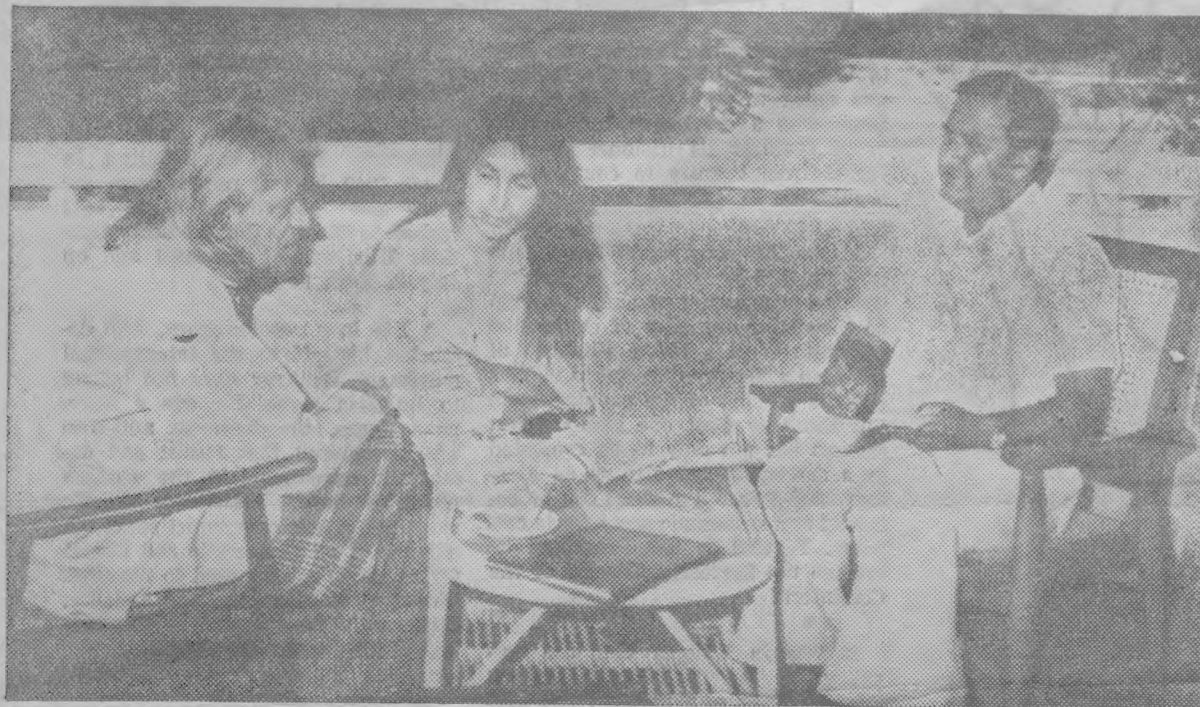


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Tambimuttu and daughter Shakuntala with interviewer Manohar Bandopadhyaya. Photo: P Kasokan

A POET'S DREAM



Sakuntala — a fun loving girl with a philosophical outlook on life.

BY RAINE AMARASINGHE

Clothed in a comfortable, chequered cotton dress, 24-year-old Sakuntala Tambimuttu bounced down the stairs of the Lake Lodge hotel, to greet us. She looked at first sight, a fun loving, carefree young girl, but it didn't take long for us to realise that there was much more to this pretty girl than just a lovely smile and a witty sense of humour.

Sakuntala is the daughter of Sri Lankan born poet living in London, James Tambimuttu who was in Sri Lanka last week collecting material for his Poetry London/Apple Magazine. Before arriving in Sri Lanka, James and Sakuntala spent some time in India — for the same purpose.

When we met Sakuntala at the hotel in Colombo where she and her father were staying, she had already packed her bags to leave Sri Lanka. It had been a very short stay.

FOUR MONTHS

"We intended staying about a month," she said. "But we got held up in India. We stayed almost four months there and I helped my father with his work, collecting material for the Magazine."

"This is the first time I am travelling with my father," Sakuntala said. "This is also my first visit to Sri Lanka."

When Sakuntala flew the thousands of miles from Massachusetts to Colombo she knew what to expect. Yet, some of her discoveries have left her bewildered. For instance, the dowry system. The fact that it still goes on with the same gusto as it did a hundred years ago, shocks her.

"Planned marriages may be o.k. if there is no such thing as a 'dowry'. It's really an awful practice where the bride gets the raw end. It's really unbelievable!" she says.

Sakuntala was in Sri Lanka for only a few days, but that was long enough for her to observe quite a few of our social habits and practices. She was quick to note the role of the woman in our society and some of

the unnecessary problems which befall a woman in Sri Lanka posed.

LIBERATION

"In the United States", she says, "the sex problem does not exist. Women are as active as men in all fields. I am a woman but there's nothing I can't achieve if I wanted to. Yet there are women who fight for liberation. It's really awful—all those masculine, screaming women marching along the roads with placards ... wasting everybody's time. If women want to prove that they are as good as men, then they should get down to doing some constructive work instead of making a big noise about it which gets them nowhere."

Being a student of the Massachusetts University and a girl much about town, working in a restaurant during her free time, Sakuntala has learnt a lot about life.

"Women in the United States are more independent than Sri Lankan women. Just the same, there are also big problems like teenage pregnancies, unmarried mothers, broken families etc. unlike in Sri Lanka where, the problem is not so acute because most young girls and boys lead sheltered lives."

About the two lifestyles in general, she had made one observation.

"I find life in Sri Lanka much more relaxed and simple. People have more time on their hands but in the United States, life is more abstract and complex. I find that the people here are much more easy going."

TALENTS

Being the daughter of none less than poetic genius James Tambimuttu himself, it comes as no surprise that Sakuntala too has diverse talents and interests.

She is very interested in poetry, and reads anything in verse. When she was younger, she used to write poetry, some of which her father is extremely proud of.

"I write stories, mostly bordering on philosophy. Love stories are out—I guess I am no romanticist!" She quipped.

Sakuntala who studies mass media at the University also studies dancing, music, and languages among other things. She speaks English, French and Hebrew (her mother is Jewish), and learns Karnatic and Bengali dancing. Among the musical instruments she has mastered are the flute and the guitar.

"Indian music is very difficult to master", she says. "It's a very different type of music altogether — so beautiful and complex."

Sakuntala reads anything she comes across and enjoys travelling, cooking, dancing mountain climbing etc. She also enjoys all types of music. "Nearly all except disco music."

"I like blue grass, rock and roll and even funk — but disco music is out", she says.

Sakuntala has made no elaborate plans for her future except sticking to her first love — mass media — pottering about at a TV studio is her idea of 'great work'.

MARRIAGE

"Maybe I'd get married — if I met a nice guy — but like I said, I'm no romanticist. Marriage is necessary for children to grow up healthy and happy, and I believe that, so many marriages fail because many people don't seem to understand what marriage is all about. They expect the initial 'magic' to last forever and when it doesn't, they are disappointed — there's much more than romance to a marriage."

With her legs tucked up on the chair, Sakuntala didn't show any regret about not being dolled up for the photos. "I am a very earthy person", she said as she grinned into the camera.

And who can describe her better than herself?



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Govt action malicious: Saklecha

BHOPAL, June 2 (PTI)—Former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister V. K. Saklecha said last night that the State Government's action in registering a case against him under the prevention of corruption act was "vindictive and malicious."

"I will challenge it in the court," he told PTI.

Earlier, Chief Minister Arjun Singh had told Pressmen that permission had been accorded to the economic offences wing of the State Government for registering a case against Mr Saklecha after being satisfied that there was a "prima facie case of corruption and misuse of his offices."

US to replace obsolete arms

WASHINGTON, June 2 (AP) — The United States is increasing production of nuclear weapons to replace obsolete types but this will bring only a small change in the size of the stockpile, the US defence department has said.

At the same time, the Pentagon said yesterday the US nuclear stockpile has declined since reaching its highest level "at a few tens of thousands" of weapons in the mid-1960s.

While saying this in a "fact sheet" the Pentagon gave no figures on the current stockpile, claiming this information is classified. It provided a chart which reflected ups and downs but omitted statistics on numbers of weapons.

Heroin seized

NEW DELHI, June 2 (UNI) — The anti-excise staff of the crime branch has seized 40 gms of heroin worth Rs 12,000 from an auto-rickshaw driver of Sadar Bazar

Harvinder Singh, 30, has been arrested under the Excise Act. He appears to be a courier for some narcotics smugglers, police said.

He is being interrogated to ascertain his connections in the smuggling world.

Tambimuttu — poets' poet

A fine amalgam of Ananda Coomaraswamy and Ezra Pound, poet, editor and publisher Tambimuttu has a busy day meeting poets, journalists

got "involved neck deep in the literary scene in London."

He recalls his close association with Eliot, Auden, Spencer, McNeice, Dylan Thomas and a

young poets. Deeply influenced by the rasa concept of Indian poetics, he says, 'Poetry without rasa would fail to evoke—it is no poetry at all.'

It was for Tambimuttu's boldness to publish such rebel poets as Allen Ginsberg and the pop poet Bob Dylan that they rose to the eminence they enjoyed later. Taking poetry to the man in the street, Tambimuttu published the Jazz and the Beatles. He was honoured by the Beatles to edit the Apple Magazine for them.

Tambimuttu is also famous for his tributary volumes on the 60th birth day of T. S. Eliot and on the 77th birthday of Marianne Moore. Interestingly soon after Tambimuttu's prediction at the release of the tributary volumes, T. S. Eliot won the novel prize in literature.

Recently Tambimuttu founded an Indian Arts Council in London to promote works of Indian Poets and artists in the West. He is hopeful that both the Indian Government and the voluntary organisations would back the venture.

"Such ventures," he says are not viable commercially. Between 1970 and 1972 he lost as much as per 55,000 in poetry publication. However, he has not yet lost hope and is seriously planning to publish the works of Indian authors for Western readers.

Now that Indian people know his contribution to arts and poetry, he hopes that a substantial number of copies of Poetry London will find their way to India. "I have met here renowned authors, artists, journalists and also the Prime Minister and explained to them need to promote the Indian Arts Council, he says.



Tambimuttu

and admirers who call on him daily in Kaka Nagar.

Lighting one cigarette after another, he listen to and speak with every caller in spite of his failing health.

He is touring India to gather material for the Indian number of his famous journal, Poetry London. He is bringing out the special issue devoted to Indian poetry from all languages to mark the Festival of India cele-

host of other poets with whom he sat in the pubs of Fitzrovia. They listened to each other's poems for long hours in the late thirties.

Chelsea and Bloomsbury were then, he recalls, the well-known artistic quarters. But his own quarters were the haunt of Verlaine, Rimbaud, scicket and

Police break up Romanian 'TM group'

SEELISBERG, Switzerland, June 2 (AP)—Reports of a crackdown on an alleged Romanian chapter of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Transcendental Meditation (TM) movement have caused puzzlement at TM Headquarters here.

TM sources yesterday said the movement has no centres or accredited teachers in eastern Europe. They said the Romanian-Swiss emigrant couple who, according to Bucharest reports, ran meditation courses there presumably initiated them on their own, using TM's name.

The Bucharest reports quoted Romanian officials as saying that the group, identified as a Romanian chapter of TM, pursued "subversive" aims. Some 400 people, including one Cabinet Minister, four Deputy Ministers and two generals reportedly were fired or demoted after police broke up the group.

Defection ban move hailed

SURAT, June 2 (UNI)—The BJP today welcomed the proposal of Chief Election Commissioner S. L. Shaktidhar for a legislation to ban defections.

The report on the May 19 elections, however, expressed "doubt if the ruling party, which has developed a vested interest in the present situation, would bestir itself about it".

What the Congress-I had done in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh in the process of Ministry-making was "extremely myopic". It would have "disastrous consequences" for the Congress-I in future, it added.

The report said that Haryana Chief Minister Bhajan Lal had veritably proclaimed that there was a high premium on indiscipline, disloyalty and rebellion in the Congress-I.

US 'directly'

He is being interrogated to ascertain his connections in the smuggling world.

Students deny charge

Continued from page 1 col 5

get much chance to give their version either to the Director or to the inquiry committee. When reports about their suspension appeared in the Press they wanted to give their version but were reportedly advised against it by a very senior member of the staff who told them that it was an internal matter of the school which need not be publicised.

At the same time, reports against them and the official version continued to appear in the Press. The cuttings were mysteriously sent to their parents outside Delhi, the students say.

Refraining from levelling charges against anyone, the students claim they are being victimised. Since their suspension for the "so-called" incident they have been reportedly denied the use of the school library and have not been allowed to sit for their examinations.

And now their scholarships are also being impounded, they allege without a fair hearing to them, for an offence they say they have not committed.

The Director of the NSD was not available for comment.

Sweat glands

On summer's simmering days and stagnant nights when the body lies limp, breath comes slowly, the rhythmic heart sinks and the mind is diffused, these alone work efficiently, exuding filmy dampness, oozy, dew-like drops or clammy streams through the skin's unseen openings.

O. P. Bhagat

special issue devoted to Indian poetry from all languages to mark the Festival of India celebrations. His charming daughter, Shakuntala (by his American wife) lends continuous assistance with background materials and appointment schedules to the zestful interviewers.

Poetry London, which Tambimuttu founded and has been editing since January 1939, has the historical significance of publishing the first works of some of the greatest authors and artists of England and America. Among them were, Lawrence Durrell, Vladimir Nabokov, Cleanth Brooks, Henry Miller, Keith Douglas, Henry Moore and Ben Nicholson.

Also to see their literary birth through this journal were the writers of such mark as Bernard Spencer, David Gascoyne and Anal's Nin. Tambimuttu calls his magazine a lodestone to attract young and talented writers, and time has proved the truth of it. In addition to this 43-year-old prestigious journal and scores of poetry anthologies, Tambimuttu has been the guest editor of Poetry Chicago, Atlantic Monthly and Poetry London-New York.

An expatriate from Sri Lanka, Tambimuttu went abroad at the age of 20. He went to England to marry his Sri Lankan fiancée, as he put it, and soon



Shakuntala

Dylan Thomas. Fitzroy and St Fitzroy Tavern, he says, had then no name. Tambimuttu named it Fitzrovia which is now recorded in the OED.

For his literary and cultural contributions in England, he also figures in the Cambridge History of English Literature. He is now 66.

In his late twenties, Tambimuttu was known as a rebel in England when he strove to bring poetry close to the people. He spurned outright both the journalistic diatribes and academic strangulation of poetry.

Reminiscing, he says, "The poetry landscape then was so constipated that it was ruled by a monolithic group of poets who wanted almost a kind of journalistic poetry. It lacked rasa or literary taste in the mouth."

His journal, as also the Editions poetry London books which he brought out soon proved a challenge to the muddled state of English poetry of that time. He not only shaped the new trend of English poetry but also published boldly the new 'trucks' whom no editors would dare publish for fear of critical hostility.

Over the years, he has provided valuable guidance to the

mote the Indian Arts Council, he says.

This would be a shopwindow for India in the West, he feels. The soft-spoken, and gray-haired, the poet-publisher, who has been intimately connected with the Theatre of All Possibilities with Honey Hoffman, is the author of three poetry volumes and scores of poems strewn over in anthologies.

He lived for about 20 years in US (1951-1969). Poetry to him came almost as ancestral inheritance. His grandfather S. Tambimuttu Pillai was an accomplished poet and opera writer whose cultural contribution in Sri Lanka already a legend as Tambimuttu is himself a legend in England as a poet-maker.

Manohar Bandopadhyay

involved

MOSCOW, June 2 (UPI)—The Soviet news agency, Tass, describes the United States as a direct accomplice in Britain's "colonial war with Argentina over the Falkland Islands."

"The Washington Administration takes an immediate part in the planning and staging actions against Argentina and actually inspires the bloody conflict in the South Atlantic," Tass said yesterday.

The official Soviet media consistently have been critical of US assistance to Britain in the conflict. "Latin American countries realise ever more clearly that Washington regards them only as a sphere of ensuring the United States interests, as a tool in the United States' dangerous global policy of regemonism and neo-colonialism," Tass said.



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And now their scholarships are also being impounded, they allege without a fair hearing to them, for an offence they say they have not committed.

The Director of the NSD was not available for comment.

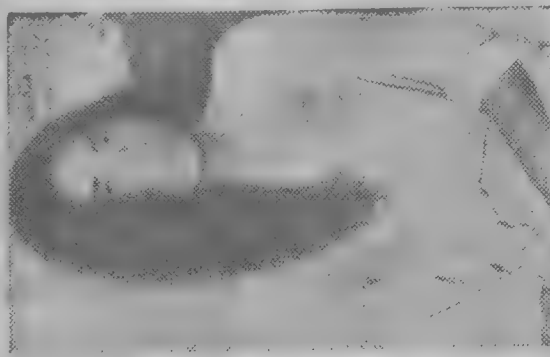
Sweat glands

On summer's
simmering days
and stagnant nights
when the body lies limp,
breath comes slowly.

Tambimuttu

host of other poets with whom he sat in the pubs of Fitzrovia. They listened to each other's poems for long hours in the late thirties.

Chelsea and Bloomsbury were then, he recalls, the well-known artistic quarters. But his own quarters were the haunt of Verlaine, Rimbaud, scikit and



Shakuntala

Dylan Thomas, Fitzroy and St Fitzroy Tavern, he says, had then no name. Tambimuttu named it Fitzrovia which is now recorded in the OED.

For his literary and cultural contributions in England, he also figures in the Cambridge History of English Literature. He is now 66.

In his late twenties, Tambimuttu was known as a rebel in England when he strove to bring poetry close to the people. He spurned outright both the journalistic diatribes and academic strangulation of poetry.

Reminiscing, he says, "The poetry landscape then was so constipated that it was ruled by a monolithic group of poets who wanted almost a kind of journalistic poetry. It lacked rasa or literary taste in the mouth."

back the venture

"Such ventures," he says are not viable commercially. Between 1970 and 1972 he lost as much as per 55,000 in poetry publication. However, he has not yet lost hope and is seriously planning to publish the works of Indian authors for Western readers.

Now that Indian people know his contribution to arts and poetry, he hopes that a substantial number of copies of Poetry London will find their way to India. "I have met here renowned authors, artists, journalists and also the Prime Minister and explained to them need to promote the Indian Arts Council," he says.

This would be a shopwindow for India in the West, he says. The soft-spoken, and gray-haired, the poet-publisher, who has been intimately connected with the Theatre of All Possibilities with Honey Hoffman, is the author of these poetry volumes and scores of poems strewn over in anthologies.

He lived for about 20 years in US (1961-1969). Poetry to him came almost as ancestral inheritance. His grandfather S. Tambimuttu Pillai was an accomplished poet and opera writer whose cultural contribution in Sri Lanka already a legend as 'Tambimuttu' is himself a legend in England as a poet-maker.

Manohar Bandopadhyay

share for a legislation to ban defections.

The report on the May 19 elections, however, expressed "doubt if the ruling party, which has developed a vested interest in the present situation, would bestir itself about it".

What the Congress-I had done in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh in the process of Ministry-making was "extremely myopic". It would have "disastrous consequences" for the Congress in future, it added.

The report said that Haryana Chief Minister Bhajan Lal had proudly proclaimed that there was a high premium on indiscipline, disloyalty and rebellion in the Congress.

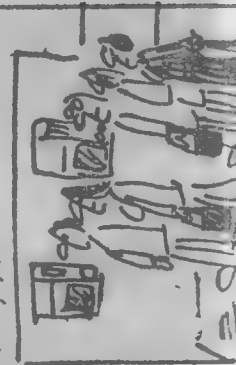
US 'directly' involved

MOSCOW, June 2 (UPI) — The Soviet news agency, Tass, describes the United States as a direct accomplice in Britain's "colonial war with Argentina over the Falkland Islands."


"The Washington Administration takes an immediate part in the planning and staging actions against Argentina and actually inspires the bloody conflict in the South Atlantic," Tass said yesterday.

The official Soviet media consistently have been critical of US assistance to Britain in the conflict. "Latin American countries realise ever more clearly that Washington regards them only as a sphere of interests, as a tool in the United States' dangerous global policy of hegemonism and neo colonialism," Tass said.

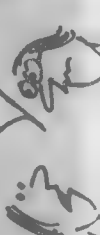
MOTHER DAIRY



MOTHER DAIRY

MILK TO  COST MORE

SHOULDN'T WE CALL IT STEP-MOTHER DAIRY?



Profile

Poetry moves closer to masses

AS in India, in England too poetry is not yet the staple of the masses. Books of poems do not sell by the million but English poets are able to make a living — a reasonably comfortable living at that — without being required to do sundry jobs.

Even if individual poets do not have a large market, they usually make enough during a three-month or six-month stint at an American university to support themselves for the rest of the year. Many English poets read their poems at specially arranged poetry evenings where admission is priced. Allen Ginsberg draws audiences as large as 2,000.

The mounting strength of the poetry movement in the U.K. is in part the outcome of the sustained effort put in for decades by Sri Lanka born Tambimuttu and others. *Poetry London*, now called *Poetry London/Apple Magazine*, which he had been publishing and editing for the last 43 years, has provided the first opportunity to appear in print to many a budding poet whose name is known across the English-speaking world today.

So significant has been Mr. Tambimuttu's contribution to literary activities in England that when he went away to the U.S., Edith Sitwell pleaded for his return. "We need you in London. The bosh purporting to be verse gets worse every day. I wish to goodness you would come back," wrote Sitwell.

While in "exile" in the U.S. Mr. Tambimuttu used to edit *Poetry London/New York*, which also was quite a phenomenon on the other side of the Atlantic. His *Poetry London* blazed a trail and a number of magazines named in the same pattern, including *Poetry India*, have sprung up in many countries. He regards them all as his offsprings. Names like *Poetry London*, he believes, give a distinct identity to a literary magazine and brings it close to the community.

A scion of the late Ananda Coomaraswamy family, Mr. Tambimuttu studied science in Colombo. When he was only 16, some of his songs were released on six penny records in London. "Tea time in Ceylon", a musical extravaganza, was his composition.

By the time he turned 22, Mr. Tambimuttu decided to take a boat to England. The apparent purpose was to meet his Sri Lankan fiancée,



but the two never married. The visit however enabled the young man with an itch to compose songs to come in contact with literary celebrities like Stephen Spender, which gave a new turn to his life.

Mr. Tambimuttu was a frequent visitor to a cafe in Fitzroy Square which was the rendezvous of many literary celebrities. Among the men he came to know there was Julian Symons who used to edit the well known journal, *Twentieth Century Verse*, and Geoffrey Grigson who edited *New Verse*. But to the young man both magazines were partisan and restrictive, and he vowed to bring out his own.

And so within a year of his arrival in London he began publishing *Poetry London* to bring poets and poetry closer to the masses. Since he believed all litterateurs could coexist at the same time and place, he used to publish under the aegis of *Editions Poetry, London*, a general list of books by authors whose names are now well known. The first books of authors like Lawrence Durrell and Vladimir Nabokov published in London came out under this imprint.

Mr. Tambimuttu thinks his poetry list was influential in moulding the taste of successive decades both in the U.K. and the U.S. He was the first publisher on either side of the Atlantic to publish the *Book of Jazz* which included serious poetry and short stories. He also founded the *Ballad Books* series of collections of verse which were ignored by academics and the highbrow but had a popular appeal.

Mr. Tambimuttu returned to England after 20 years in the U.S. when Lawrence Durrell wrote to him that a literary agent was "screaming for my memoirs". The memoirs have not yet come out but in London he was invited by the Beatles to set up the *Apple Magazine* to popularise songs and lyrics which could be considered poetry by the man in the street.

Poetry London/Apple Magazine which he now edits is a multi media magazine which has "concrete poems" printed in colour, four page pullouts of illustrations based on a chosen poem and the disc of a poem sung to the accompaniment of instruments. The latest issue of the magazine has Robin Williamson's song on Mabau.

Mr. Tambimuttu is now in India to collect material for the Indian number of *Poetry London/Apple Magazine* which he proposes to publish to synchronise with the now running Festival of India in Britain. This includes Amrita Pritam's poems set to music. He has already exhibited his £250 (Rs. 4,175) book "India Love Poems" in connection with the festival.

The expatriate Sri Lankan, who is making his first visit to this country and later to Sri Lanka after 31 years, is keen that a shop window for Indian writers and artists is set up in the West. He has formed the India Arts Council and spoken to many prominent persons including the Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi.

During his stay in Madras Mr. Tambimuttu will look specially for acrostic poems in colour which used to be written across the bodies of intertwining serpents. This was a pastime of his grandfather the late S. Tambimuttu Pillai, who edited the bilingual *Sanmarkapothini* and *Tribune* in Sri Lanka.

Nitish Chakravarty

Children's feature solutions

Square words

1. Broom; 2. Mattress; 3. Squirrel; 4. Lighthouse; 5. Easel; 6. Lock; 7. Kangaroo; 8. Orange; 9. Egg; 10. Goat; 11. Top.

Just baffle your friend

FOCUS ON THE ARTS

Poet Tambimuttu's mission — putting Lanka on the cultural map



"Tambi"

A WINDOW ON THE EAST

By Carol Aloysius

Tambimuttu, better known as Tambi, the well-known editor of Poetry London, is back in Sri Lanka on a brief visit.

The rebel who was in forefront of English poets in London in the late 60s when he set up 'Poetry London' in 1938 has returned to the country of his birth to rekindle a light in Sri Lanka's Western cultural wasteland, and pave the way for a (Western) cultural renaissance in this country.

Uppermost in his mind is a desire to give unknown struggling local poets, artists and musicians (those who can put poetry to music) a place in the sun by including their works in his multi-media magazine, Poetry London Apple Magazine which he now edits, features poems pull-outs in colour of poems illustrated by artists along with a record of poems sung or recited to music in a slipcase attached to the inside of the back cover.

"There's bound to be a great deal of hidden talent in my country which I'm determined to discover. I hope to promote such talented artists by giving them the prominence they deserve", he says.

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He has already made arrangements for his library of modern and ancient Indian classics with the Oxford University Press of India and for the Indian publication of his magazine Poetry London/Apple Magazine.

about his mission in Sri Lanka.

Running his long artistic fingers through his lionine white mane of hair, as though impatient to begin his task, his eyes light up with an unexpected animation and his still handsome face glows with a sudden urgency as he talks of his plans to put Sri Lanka on the world's cultural map.

"I'm hoping to get the support of those patrons of the arts in Sri Lanka, to set up a Sri Lanka Arts Council in the UK", he says. "This Council" he explains, "will be mainly for the purpose of publishing a library of modern and ancient Sri Lankan classics I have already written to the President Mr. J. R. Jayawardene mentioning such writers as J. Vijayaratne and George Key, in this connection. He is particularly anxious to review translations from Sinhala and Tamil books for possible book publications in the UK, as well."

He has been here says, on a similar mission to India. "In the past four months, I have had the opportunity to discuss the opening of a window for Eastern culture in London with the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi and several MPs including Srikantha Varma. Dr.

"I have selected from the OUP the titles for my own list in the UK. In exchange the Oxford Press will consider editions of Poetry London titles", he says.

His visit to India from where he has just arrived was originally for the purpose of collecting material for the Indian number for publication during the Indian Festival in November. As part of the Festival he has exhibited a 1950 book 'India Love Poems' and original illustrations by John Piper in the Parkin Gallery in UK.

Although his visit to India was unannounced and without the usual fanfare Tambi was delighted and overwhelmed by the spontaneous welcome he received both from the patrons of the arts and from the Press.

Tambi has come back after 31 years. This is his second visit since he left England in 1937 with what one writer said, "high hopes in his heart, a pop song in his pocket and very little else".

He is undoubtedly one of the most sympathetic, understanding and approachable publishers of modern times. It was Tambi who helped such 20th century poets as Dylan Thomas, Keith Douglas, George Barker, Gavin Ewart and David Gascoigne.

lie on the wayside until someone picks them up someday". He would be happy to find a Poetry London magazine started in very village in UK since the magazine represents the collective voice of the people.

Both Sri Lanka and India have a long tradition of culture, older than in most Western countries. And this is why he is determined

that a window be opened to their cultures in the Western world.

This Grand old man of the Arts (he celebrates his 65th birthday today) looks to the government for support to extend his stay here so that he could at least see the germination of his exciting new ideas in this field.

Perhaps a new cultural era will emerge in this country as a result of his visit. And Tambi

will no doubt relish role as the High Priest of a ritual that is hopefully unearth a hidden gem among his blessings.

He leaves Sri Lanka shortly and could be contacted at the Lodge Hotel at K. pitiya where he his daughter Sathala are staying.

"I'm ready to come back any time I'm needed. After all this is my home", he says.

Indira's story BOOKS

"INDIRA'S STORY"
By Lal Premnath de Mel

What is the story of Indira Gandhi? It is the story of a lonely child separated from her parents and even grandparents, owing to the frequent terms of imprisonment forced upon them?

Or is it the story of India's Freedom Movement led by Mahatma Gandhi, Motilal Nehru Jawaharlal Nehru and others?

In this short biography covering the childhood and early politics of Indira Gandhi, Lal Premnath de Mel has succeeded in proving that Indira was trained by circumstance to face any problem despite its seriousness.

The author, save the book is meant for children and has scrupulously attempted to keep out serious politics. Therefore he has concluded the book with the chapter of Mrs. Gandhi being elected Prime Minister in 1966. All controversies with regard to her Prime Ministership will not disturb any

school child who is reading this book.

It is very appropriate that the author has selected as the first chapter a scene from Ananda Bazar immediately after all the Nehrus, Motilal, Jawaharlal, Kamala, Vijayalakshmi and others) were taken to prison leaving Indira alone at home with "Auntie Betty" to look after her.

Indira's school days at Poona and at Santiniketan are described in a manner that the national institutions are clearly focussed.

The conservative Indian family always preferred sons to daughters. Jawaharlal's mother also got disturbed when she found that she had a granddaughter and not a grandson as expected. The author has given Motilal's words exactly, on this occasion as described in Mrs. Mathes Singh's "We Nehrus". Motilal Nehru said: "You wait and see that this girl will be greater than house boys."

With a number of

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The book is relevant to coincide with the 50th Anniversary of India's Independence. S. PIVASENA.

'Emperor Jones'

Stage N° Set, the theatre group, presents "The Emperor Jones" by Eugene O'Neill at the Lionel Wendt Theatre from August 20 to 26. Chitrasena will play The Emperor. Karan Kreenkridge directs the production.

For 51 years, ever since its appearance on the American stage in 1920, "The Emperor Jones" has remained a compelling dramatic

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We are participants in the tragedy of Brutus Jones, former porter and ex-convict, who becomes the autocratic "emperor" of a West Indian island. Black himself, playing easily upon the natives' ignorance and superstition, Jones enriches himself at their expense and boasts to a cockney trader, Smithers that

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"There's bound to be a great deal of hidden talent in my country which I'm determined to discover. I hope to promote such talented artists by giving them the prominence they deserve", he says.

Magnetic

An encounter with this Poet and Publisher par excellence is an unforgettable experience. Tambi still has that magnetic presence that makes him stand out in any crowd of artists. Although visibly tired after only just arriving from India, he was only too happy to talk

and Tambi is now already on his way to fulfilling his dream of opening that door to Eastern culture in London. As a result of his discussions with the highest officials of Indian bureaucracy, he was able to win their co-operation in setting up the first Indian Arts Council in the UK with its headquarters in New Delhi, three months ago. Tambi who is well known for his patronage of writers and artists is naturally the Chairman of this new council which will help struggling Indian writers to blossom out as gifted poets and writers in their own right.

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The discussions have turned out to be fruitful.

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Why does this drama

of fear and retrogression grip us so powerfully today? When it first appeared, the play ignored contemporary rules and conventions, and even its form (there was no intermission) and length were anathema. It remains as imaginative and as richly theatrical as when it was written.

This is a drama for all men which finds particular depth in the heads of a mature and sensitive actor. It has, indeed, remained one of the most demanding and controversial roles for a black actor since its inception.

(From the Introduction to the Theatre Recording).

● REVIEW

Artistic extravaganzas

FOCUS ON THE ARTS

Poet Tambimuttu's mission — putting Lanka on the cultural map



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The book is released to coincide with the 35th Anniversary of India's Independence.

Tambimuttu: patron of young writers

By DNYANESHWAR NADKARNI

"TAMBIMUTTU is here", said a colleague, and we rushed promptly to meet him at an informal dinner with a friend.

An unusual thrill runs down one's spine. Tambimuttu — legend of one's boyhood. His photographs used to appear often in *The Illustrated Weekly*, and so did interviews with the expatriate writer and articles by him. One knew him as editor of a birthday volume on T. S. Eliot. One had vague notions of him as a poet who communed with the young literature of London during the war years.

For quite some time, at the friend's house, there was no sign of Tambimuttu! An anxious phone call elicited the curious information that the old man had gone to *The Times of India* offices in the evening to deliver some article and that, finding no money in his pockets for taxi fare, he had walked all the way from Bori Bunder to the Backbay Reclamation location of his house.

PATRON SAINT

Ultimately, the great man arrives. Expectation runs like through the air like hot ripples.

One is not disappointed. Tambimuttu is, indeed, a personality. A beautiful man with a flowing white mane of hair, a handsome face complete with a Tamilian hooked nose and withal a genuinely mellow look which corroborates his image as a man full of love and wisdom, a



Mr. Tambimuttu

patron saint of poets, novelists and artists.

"I left my native Ceylon when I was about 20 years old", the old man tells me. He smokes cigarettes with a preoccupied, thoughtful air and sips his beer with equal nonchalance.

"Before the second world war I had a long stint in publishing", he says, "I published the works of Lawrence Durrell, Henry Miller, Anais Nin..."

I hear all these names with a gaping mouth. Who doesn't know these path-breaking names? They were all bold experimenters, and for a young man from the East to pioneer the vintage writings of these great writers was a unique feat, indeed.

"*Poetry London*, the magazine I edited, started in 1938", Tambimuttu continues. "During the war I publish-

the legend, under the poet's name, "Nobel prize winner"!

Tambimuttu also edited a 77th birthday volume for American poetess Marianne Moore. "I have lived for the past 29 years in the States", he told me. His magazine undergoes an appropriate change in nomenclature by calling itself *Poetry London-New York*.

"As editor and publisher, I have published the poetry of Indian poets like Amrita Pritam, Buddhadeva Bose, Jibananda Das and Amiya Chakravarty. We have also published poems from Bangladesh illustrated by Felix Topolski." Mention of Topolski brings back associations of the war years. In London Tambimuttu must have lived as a member of a very closely knit artists' and writers' community whose ideology and outlook on life was shaped by the experience of the war.

"John Piper and Graham Sutherland have also done illustrations for me", says Tambimuttu, "reeling out these famous names with casual familiarity. But each name is a world in itself, and one pities our own young intelligentsia which has lost touch with the exciting legacy of our British past."

Tambimuttu turns to the subject of popularising poetry. "Kenneth Rexroth used to read poetry in pubs. *Poetry London* used to bring out yearbooks of jazz. At one time I was planning to edit the *Apple* magazine for the Beatles. I have been interested in publishing the songs of Bob Dylan. My activities had for some time a base in San Francisco right in the centre of this world of modern music."

He mentions with much affection the marathon verse of Beat poet Peter Orlovsky who, several years ago, had visited India with Allen Ginsberg. Tambimuttu's British contemporaries of earlier decades, poets Stephen Spender, W. H. Auden and Louis McNeice, have all visited this country in the post-independence years.

INDIAN POETRY

"I have now returned after 31 years", says this rishi-like friend of poets. Tambimuttu tells me that he is here in order to edit a volume of Indian poetry to be published on July 15 during the Festival of India in London. He wants to get it printed here. I promise to help him and mention names of poets known in English translation.

The evening lingers on. Tambimuttu is treated to an affectionate meal of *sambar* and rice. I stop asking him any more questions. One doesn't want to probe his personal life. The aura of a legend is very much around him, especially on this evening. And we shall keep that aura intact for you, great master!



Mr. Tambimuttu

patron saint of poets, novelists and artists.

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"*Poetry London*, the magazine I edited, started in 1938", Tambimuttu continues, "During the war I published Henry Moore's 'Shelter Sketchbook.' Before that Moore was known only as a collector's artist but these sketches took him to the common man."

Henry Moore visited the underground tube stations in London when they were used as air-raid shelters by London citizens. His sketches of Londoners huddled up underground were, perhaps, the beginning of the evolution of his great sculptural, *Reclining Figure*.

"George Orwell took a van through France and Germany after the war", Tambimuttu told me, "It had its sides pasted with these pages from the 'Shelter Sketchbook', and it created a sensation."

I paint mental pictures of young Tambimuttu poring over manuscripts of poems and novels or holding forth in London pubs in the company of rugged geniuses like Dylan Thomas. (I had myself spent a day with sculptor Henry Moore in his village of Much Hadham in Hertfordshire in 1951.)

BIRTHDAY VOLUME

"I remember the birthday book you edited for T. S. Eliot", I say to our guest of the evening.

"Well, that's a sort of family tradition", Tambimuttu says without batting an eyelid, "My grandfather used to publish books on birthdays. For Eliot's 60th birthday I brought together translators of his poetry like the Greek poet Sefaris. The volume was put together at a time when Eliot's name was being considered for the Nobel Prize. And, then, just when it was being got together, I happened to say to John Hayward, 'I hear Tom is getting the Nobel Prize!' John said, 'Please keep quiet!' Eventually Eliot did get the Nobel Prize, and I think the way was paved by our birthday tribute!"

The second edition of the Eliot birthday volume was quick to carry

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SERVER

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LAKE HOUSE

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Friday, August 13, 1982. PRICE 75 CENTS

Registered as a Newspaper in Sri Lanka
Colombo P. O. Box 116
Telegrams: 'OBSERVER'

talks to decide...

s from sition?

de Mel
have a roundtable conference to
to contest President J. R. Jayewar-

Secretary SLFP (S) negotiating with other
how they intend re- parties for a common
candidate"
solving the issue bet- Asked why no SLFP
between Mr. Hector Kob- (S) candidate has been
bekaduwe and Mr. T. put forward, Mr. Wick-
B. Ilangaratne, who is ramanayake said "it
reported to have walk- was not necessary at
ed out when the party this stage".
executive committee Political quarters out-
considered Mr. Kobbe- side the SLFP (S) feel
kaduwe as its candi- that the Siringa wing
date, and Mr. Wickra- prefers to agree on a
manayake said: "Our common candidate so
position is that we are that it would solve its
own internal problems
and also issues like
Mrs. Bandaranaike hav-
ing to step down from
leadership of the party
before the election
campaign begins.

ABOL OF DEAD

high- sion in "The Grapes
career of Wrath."
The late John Stela-
back on whose book
the film was based,
said Fonda was a
brooding, difficult and
driven man. But he
said of Fonda's acting
in the film: "A Lean.

(Over to Page 5)

FROM ONE ACTOR TO ANOTHER

WASHINGTON,
Aug. 12.
President and Mrs.
Reagan today paid tri-
bute to fellow actor
Henry Fonda.
"Nancy and I were
deeply saddened to

Sakuntala 'Tambi' will come back



Meet Sakunthala
Tambimuttu, the viva-
cious daughter of poet
and publisher James
Tambimuttu, Tambi to
his friends, and editor
of Poetry London.

Sakunthala, 24, is ac-
companying her father,
who was recently in
India looking for ma-
terial for his Indian
number of Poetry Lon-
don/Apple magazine
which he now edits.

Tambi is on a simi-
lar mission in Sri Lan-
ka which he is visiting
after an absence of 24
years.

Sakunthala, who
lives in America is a
student of mass media
and works in a restau-
rant during her off
days.

"I love cooking, tra-
velling, reading and
I'm extremely happy to
see Sri Lanka for the
first time. I'd love to
come back here for a
longer holiday", she
says. —(Picture by
Tony Freena).

WORLD PAPER

The looting of art
treasures has been the
detestable practice of
conquerors from time
immemorial. Colonial
times have not been
different. Many cultu-
ral treasures have been
transferred to museums
in the West. Will these
be returned?

Read about "The
Greatest Art Theft in
History" in World Pa-
per on 17 August.

On 18 August the
World Paper discusses
"Bureaucrats: The
world's unloved gov-
ernments".

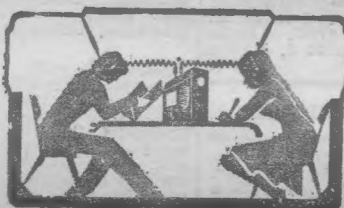
Don't miss the two
issues.

BUS CREWS BACK AT WORK

The striking workers
at the Talangama de-
pot returned to work
today having won no
demands.

Colombo South
Transport Board
Chairman M. T. Mari-
kar Bawa said that
about 100 buses out of
180 at the Talangama
Depot were on the
roads by 7.30 this mor-
ning. He was confident
the entire fleet will be
out during the course
of the day.

Mr. Bawa said that
the board would not
concede the demand
that the two employ-
ees taken into Police
custody in connection
with an alleged misan-



AUDIO - VISUAL
TRAINING
COURSES